

Book reviews

Book review

Dag Strpić

*Promjena (od Hobbesa do Hayeka)
The change (from Hobbes to Hayek)*

Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb, 1998

Although the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb has existed for almost forty years, Croatian political scientists have not shown special interest in questioning the methodological foundations of political science. Particularly neglected have been the fields of history of political science as a discipline and the problematization of certain sub-disciplines within political science. The book *The Change*, written by Dag Strpić, Professor of Political Economy at the Faculty of Political Science, is a response to this. The book is designed as a collection of background studies in which the author reviews and challenges various theoreticians (from Hobbes to Hayek) who dabbled in the “political and political-economic change”. To these studies, the author added a chapter on the development of political science and the position of political economy in relation to other social sciences and within political science.

The first chapter, entitled “Umjesto uvoda: Thomas Hobbes i nakon njega” (By way of introduction: Thomas Hobbes and beyond) is methodological in its function; Hobbes serves to the author to establish the tenor of the whole book since “movement and the power to initiate it, stop or change it, is a constitutive subject of the original approach and, we may freely add, the entire fascination of modern science” (p. 7). Strpić argues that it was Hobbes and his labour) exchange constitution of the Common-Wealth (the state-community of power as wealth or states as political-economic communities), in which “classical political and political-economic theory found

and was able to find the desired common grounds of the historical change of the medieval system” as well as “the grounds for the duration, growth, and development of the modern age as well as the desired unity of the foundation of theoretical form” (p. 9) which is extremely beneficial for the development of the entire social science and political science as well. This simplified basis is used by Smith and Hume in illuminating further how the contractual dimension of the exchange of different forms of power lies in the foundations of the “trading” society and the nation-state. In time, due to different sorts of theoretical trials – and errors – this classical foundation was undone and so “each social, political and political-economic theory found its own place” (p. 13) within the new system of social sciences and its social function in the already constituted bourgeois society of the 19th and the 20th century. The author summarises the first chapter by concluding that “modern history of the political and political-economic theory as well as the history of the theory of change (one of their central research fields) is constantly in search of the fundamental theoretical grounds” or assumes that “something like that does not exist and cannot exist” so that every investigation is only a methodological provisional provided by a “system of vocational subject boundaries set up by conventions or professional practice”. Of course, the movement “somewhere in between the two” is also possible (p. 19).

In the second chapter, entitled “Političko ekonomska and politička promjena: definiranje polja analize i problemi pristupa” (Political-economic and political change: defining the scope of analysis and the problems of approach), the author tries to show the results of the research of differently oriented authors such as Schumpeter and Parsons. For Schumpeter capitalism is an “evolutive process” that is in itself a method but also a form of economic change, that can never be stationary. Parsons, on the basis of sociology’s domination over social sciences comes up with his systematic, functional, evolutive, and

comparative understanding of “change” as a “special sort of process”, “the process that alters social structures”, particularly those institutional, and their “political organisation” (p. 25). Since for Parsons political changes go hand in hand with the polity, Strpić tries to show how the polity is, above all, politically induced, “but not as an atomised process of a societal sub-system that autonomously occurs “by itself” (and in extensive interdependence with other subsystems or in dependence on the entire community)” (p. 29).

The need for a disciplined egress from the economic and political crisis of the 1960s led to the expansion of the debate on social and political change. With this development, the question of strategy has gained prominence. The author considers this question one of the “oldest rudimentary areas in the formation and development of political sciences” (p. 31). At the end of the chapter, Strpić offers some elements of his own stance in the analysis of change and development, and argues that “unlike Almond’s measuring approach from the standpoint of comparative political systems”, one ought to be interested in the convergently analysed political and political-economic activities “based on the theories of national and global systems and the systematic general and political-economic theory” (p. 36).

In the third chapter “Politički razvoj” (Political development), the author outlines the basic elements of the theory of political development by Eisenstadt, Almond, and Pye. Strpić claims that these theoreticians did not manage to outline a “political science approach to the problems of the community and its integral change”, but reduced the entire theory to the limits of political system (p. 61). The way out, according to the author, is not in the so called return to the state as an antithesis to Almond’s approach, but in the recourse to the seminal literature of political, economic, and social theory (the literature on global and national systems, economic, social, and cultural development, on the new political economy, all the way down to the “fundamental political theory and the theory of the state”). What is here central, according to the author, is to choose an approach that would

not be synthetic but derived in a “more arduous convergent manner” (p. 66).

The fourth chapter, with the title “Politička ekonomija Friedricha Augusta von Hayeka” (Political economy of Friedrich August von Hayek), in the form of an intellectual biography, outlines the basic elements of Hayek’s understanding of changes. The author claims that Hayek’s idea of the price system of the free entrepreneurial competition and the legal and political institutions controlled by the rule of law cannot sufficiently ensure that changes will be unimpeded and that they will be reduced to only one sphere of an open society (p. 125).

In the fifth chapter, “Političke znanosti i integralna politička znanost: politička ekonomija kao znanost među političkim znanostima i kao znanstvena disciplina, grana političke znanosti” (Political sciences and the integral political science: political economy as a science among political sciences and as a scientific discipline, a branch of political science) describes the development of contemporary political science and its sub-disciplines in the context of the reform of the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. A prominent space is reserved for political economy which today is not “one of the fundamental modern social and political sciences..., but a new... and distinct complex discipline” (p. 186).

By way of conclusion, it might be said that the author has written an unconventional book, intended for “postgraduate students at the Faculty of Political Science”. The author has on the one hand opted for a compendium, and on the other for a work in progress, since some questions “only hinted at in this book will be more thoroughly” (p. 193) answered in the next one: *Politologija i politička ekonomija: paradigme i problemi* (Political science and political economy: paradigms and problems).

The book includes a huge, 80-page bibliography, mostly including books about political theory and political-economic literature. This testifies to the author’s enormous enthusiasm, surely an encouragement to the new generations of researchers in Croatia.

Tonči Kursar

Book review

Ivan Cifrić, ed.

Etička iskušenja znanosti i društva
Ethical challenges of science and society

HSD, Department of Sociology at the
 Faculty of Arts, 1988, 308 pages

The essays published in the anthology *Bioetika. Etička iskušenja znanosti i društva* are the “fruits” of the talks held in Zagreb on 17 October 1997, organised by the editorial board of the magazine *Socijalna ekologija* (Social ecology) and by the Department of Sociology of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Zagreb. The importance of this conference lies in the fact that it was the first interdisciplinary discussion on the subject of bioethics in Croatia. Naturally, it does not mean it was the first time the participants dealt with that topic.

The anthology is divided into three parts:

1. Ethics, ecology, and bioethics.
2. Bioethics, anthropology, and genetic engineering.
3. The right to life and medical ethics.

The anthology begins with Vjekoslav Mikecin’s article *Etičke implikacije modernog pojma napretka i razvoja* (Ethical implications of the modern notion of progress and development) (pp. 19-32). The author claims that the symptoms of the crisis of the notion of progress and development are manifested primarily in the following areas: art, philosophy, the emergence of a critical theory of society (“the Frankfurt school which was to evolve into the most stringent critique of the modern notion of progress and the instrumental use of *ratio*”, p. 23) and in global civilisational/culturological concepts.

In his article *Ekološki i društveno-etički izazovi genetske tehnologije* (Ecological and

socio-ethical challenges to genetic technology) (pp. 33-52), Andrej Kirn points out that the development of science and its uses must, with the help of science itself, become forthright, refined and positive. “If science itself is not most critical, most attentive and most outspoken, it may happen that we are going to be ... faced with a general, non-rational, value-negative criticism that will most probably affect the material and general conditions of its undertaking. It is not difficult to guess whose side would politics, dependent on the voter, take.” (p. 51). Kim concludes that under such circumstances a rational communication between the science and the public will almost be impossible.

The next article, *Bioetička paradigma* (Bioethical paradigm) (pp. 53-72) is by Rade Kalanj. It begins by asking whether we are entering a period of bioethical paradigm. The first answer is based on sceptical relativization, while the other is based on the particular seriousness of the substantiality of the bioethical worldview. The author goes on to explain the notion of normative offensive triggered off by the bioethical topics, in which an ever widening circle of scientific, political and various cultural protagonists has taken part. This offensive is manifest globally and locally, at the national and the international levels, within certain scientific disciplines and the interdisciplinary communication.

Ivan Cifrić’s *Ekološka etika: odgovornost za okoliš – odgovornost za život* (Ecological ethics: responsibility for environment – responsibility for life) (pp. 73-93); the very title suggests the basic thesis: the responsibility for the environment is the responsibility for life. The underlying assumption of this hypothesis is the understanding of the relation between the environment (*ôikos*) and the life (*bios*). The research findings have produced an outline of the perception of the types of responsibility defined by “ethos-types” and the relation of these types to the four aspects of *ôikos/bios*: the survival of the species, the restrictions of the sovereignty in the environment’s depletion, the actual behaviour in everyday life and the application of gen-technologies in the modification of human genetic structure. Cifrić concludes: “The increase of the

complexity of scientific subject-matter and its fragmentation, leading to narrowing its subject-matter, results in the crisis of the legitimacy of the scientific explanation of the totality of the problem of the relation between *ôikos* and *bios*. Partly due to this there is the quest for a religious explanation of the universe. For science does not provide for what religion provides for: by means of the transcendental, religion gives ample sense to the immanent” (pp. 90-1).

Nikola Skledar in *Bioetika i antropologija* (Bioethics and anthropology) (pp. 97-107) says that human beings are unquestionably natural, biological, live, physical beings. However, human beings are at the same time social, spiritual beings, cultural beings in the sense of producing the world and civilising it, improving its natural assets and life. Skledar concludes: “Human beings are very complex, not only naturally or spiritually, culturally or socially, but are a product of mutuality, of the interactions of natural, spiritual and social principles of their constitutive generic conditions and contingencies” (p. 106).

Next is Ivan Koprek’s article that contains in its title the question *Treba li se u bioetici govoriti o čovjeku ili o osobi?* (Should bioethics deal with the human being or the person?) (pp. 109-118). “If, contrary to all naturalist tendencies, the notion of ‘human being’ is conceived in its full meaning (as is the case in the grand Western tradition, particularly Aristotle’s), then the correct answer is ‘the human being’” (p. 117). Koprek also points out that when we speak about rights, we speak of human and not personal rights.

Valentin Pozaić deals with cloning in his article *Kloniranje kao pitanje odgovornosti* (Cloning as a responsibility issue) (pp. 119-33). Today’s mentality applies to products and re-products the following rule: if they do not suit the design and the taste of manufacturers, if they are not usable, they will be destroyed. In that sense, the author wonders whether the cloned people are to meet the same fate. Regarding political history, one must ask whether this will happen with the revolution in the transfer of human life.

Nikola Visković’s essay *Stablo i čovjek* (The tree and the man) (pp. 135-66) is based on the broader eponymous study which investigates diverse attitudes of human beings towards the flora, particularly the trees as the major part of that sphere. Visković lists the reasons for the neglect of nature, the tasks of bioethics, the role of forests in the preservation of biosphere, and the use of trees in the material culture (including an economic angle).

Gen tehnologija: rješenje ili problem? (Gen technology: solution or problem?) (pp. 167-99), a text by Krešimir Kufrin, in which he argues that the debate about genetic engineering and the corresponding education is a prerequisite for its acceptance or rejection.

The last part of the anthology begins with Asim Kurjak’s article *Medicinsko-etičke dvojbe o istraživanjima ranih embrija* (Medical-ethical dilemmas about the research of early embryos) (pp. 203-15). Since Croatian policy regarding this has not been formulated, the author gives the latest American considerations and recommendations. The author suggests that doctors should also pay a lot of attention to this topic, study it thoroughly, and monitor ethic attitudes, both of their patients and their colleagues. This article, the author points out, should be understood as a contribution to the public debate concerning the Law on medically assisted fertilisation.

Zvonimir Šeparović, in his text *Bioetika, pravo na život i medicina* (Bioethics, the right to life, and medicine) (pp. 217-24) defines bioethics as a new scientific approach to “the systematic investigation of human conduct in the science of life and health care, if that conduct has been analysed in the light of moral values and principles” (p. 219).

Stjepan Orešković’s article, *AIDS i nasljedne bolesti: tko mora, a tko može znati?* (AIDS and hereditary diseases: who must, and who can know?) (pp. 225-49) is based on the study conducted by the “Bioetika” team, consisting of Ivan Cifrić, Rudolf Kalanj, Krešimir Kufrin and S. Orešković. The study’s goal was to poll the attitudes of students from various faculties of the University of Zagreb on various bioethical and ecological issues.

Ivan Šegota's article *Etički komiteti i bioetika* (Ethical committees and bioethics) (pp. 251-86) is part of a wider study: *Etičke komisije, komiteti, odbori: zašto se osnivaju i kome su potrebni?* (Ethical commissions, committees, and agencies: why are they set up and who needs them?) The author explains what bioethics is, why has it emerged; he also enumerates several ethical committees (clinical and scientific), their significance, and so on.

The last text in this anthology is Marijan Valković's article *Bioetika u Hrvatskoj: kratko izvješće* (Bioethics in Croatia: a short report) (pp. 287-93). "Concerning bioethics, in the Croatian constitution there is the proviso about the "right to life" (17,3: 21,1), to "healthy life" (69,1-2), to the "preservation of natural and cultural heritage" (2,4), the "protection of nature, human environment and human health" (50,2) (p. 288). Within the HAZU (Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences) there is the Centre for Bioethics but, in the author's opinion, it has not done much. He goes on to enumerate a plethora of institutes, societies, institutions and professional organisations that dabble in ethical issues. He also emphasises the need for establishing a centre for bioethics and ethics in science in general.

Let us now summarise.

In the first part of the anthology "Ethics, ecology and bioethics" the issues are the bioethical discourse in the theoretical/historical context and the context of man's responsibility for the environment.

In the second part, "Biogenetics, anthropology, and genetic engineering", the focus is on the anthropological and moral issues of human activity, and the results of sociological research on genetic engineering.

The third part of the book. "Right to life and medical ethics", deals with the bioethical dilemmas in medicine and law.

Bioethics is mostly seen as a "new field of ethics which concentrates on ethically relevant questions of biology, medicine, and psychology..." (p. 8). The title, *Bioetika. Etička iskušenja znanosti i društva*, implies that the focus is not solely on bioethics, as a

separate discipline, and on the theoretical issues or on the various approaches of ecological ethics, but on a broader context, particularly social: social values, legal regulations and so on.

"Bioethics ... from the views about life creates the views about the world – the biocentrist versus the anthropocentrist" (p. 13). The issues of bioethics include the social fundamentals of life, while the topic itself is becoming a challenge for a variety of sciences. What makes this whole subject (and this anthology) particularly interesting and worthwhile is the fact that the topic – bioethics – has elicited ideas from diverse researchers and fields of interests.

Ana Pažanin

Book review

Regional Meeting of Central European Political Science Associations

The fourth regional meeting of central European political science associations took place in the attractive Adriatic city of Rijeka, Croatia, on 9-12 January 1998. The event provided an opportunity not only for a scientific exchange between the six associations represented (those of Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia) but also for a discussion of other possibilities of academic collaboration.

The Rijeka meeting sought to build on earlier conferences in the series. The whole idea of cooperation between national political science associations in this region was raised in 1993 at a meeting of the presidents of the Austrian, Slovenian and Hungarian associations. The first meeting, organised by the Austrian Political Science Association, took place in Vienna, Austria, on 14-16 September 1994 and had as its theme "Political culture in central Europe". The second, organised by the Hungarian Political Science Association, was held in Budapest, Hungary, on 5-7 October

1995 on the theme “The challenge of the Europeanisation of the region: east central Europe”. The third was organised by the Slovene Political Science Association, and took place in Bled, Slovenia on 23–24 November 1996 on the theme “Conflict and consensus: pluralism and neocorporatism in new and old democracies of the region” (for reports on the earlier conferences, see *Participation* 18 (3), Winter 1994; 19 (3), Winter 1995; and 21 (1), Spring 1997).

1998 conference

The fourth conference had as its theme “New democracies at the end of the century”, a broad topic that was divided into three sub-themes:

- development and consolidation of democratic institutions;
- international relations and European integration processes; and
- social and economic dimensions of democracy and the market.

First, the conference addressed a wide range of issues relating to the development and consolidation of democratic institutions, beginning with the party system. Gábor Tóka examined the salience of left-right issues for interparty relations in four new democracies (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) utilising data from interviews with middle-level party activists, but concluded that this dimension would have long-term difficulty in asserting itself against a more fundamental cleavage, the polarisation between ex-communists and their opponents. In a case study of the Czech Republic, Jiri Kunc took a rather different line, arguing that the party system was still fluid, that the fragmentation on the left had been followed by the fragmentation on the right, and that the processes of consolidation of the party system and, more fundamentally, of democratic institutions had not yet been completed. Analysis of the longer process of formation of the Hungarian party system, however, led Zsolt Enyedi to conclude that parties had managed to evolve in the context of a well-structured electorate.

A second set of papers looked at institutional conditions associated with the building of new democracies. Henriette Riegler examined the implications of different conceptions of citizenship for the nation-building process, noting the restrictive and potentially damaging consequences of too narrow an ethnic definition of the nation. The function of the constitutional court of acting as a watchdog in the new democracies of central and eastern Europe, argued Igor Lukšić, citing evidence especially from Slovenia, was being impeded by its political role. John Coakley undertook a comparative study of the office of head of state, suggesting that even where this post had little overt political power it had inherited a tradition by which the head of state could play a significant symbolic role.

Not surprisingly, the whole question of relations with the European Union and inter-ethnic relations attracted a great deal of interest. Attila Ágh drew attention to certain paradoxes in the relationships between the countries of central and eastern Europe that were applying for EU membership and the actual structures of the EU, suggesting that the slow pace of progress may have been a function not so much of any deficiencies in the applicant countries but rather of the “democratic deficit” within the EU. Branko Caratan reflected on the broad issues raised by centrifugal trends in central and east European countries that were associated with long-standing problems of nationalism and ethnic conflict, pointing to a range of policy instruments that were available to deal with these. A third paper in this section returned to the theme of relations with the EU: Michal Klima identified the Czech Republic as the only central and east European country without a parliamentary committee for European affairs, notwithstanding the imminence of accession negotiations, and put the case for the conversion of an existing ad-hoc committee into a permanent one.

The last session dealt with the tensions between the new regimes and their citizens in a range of areas. Hans-Georg Heinrich sought to modify conventional transition theories, which focus on associated changes in the economic and cultural domains, by introducing insights from cultural theory, and specifically the con-

cepts of egalitarianism and fatalism, which, he argued, helped to explain certain non-linear or paradoxical effects in the transition process. In a case study of the Czech Republic, Vladimira Dvoráková examined the costs of a heavy concentration on privatisation as a mechanism for effecting transition to democracy, and pointed to the disillusion with democracy that resulted from disappointment at meagre economic benefits. In an ambitious study of a range of NGOs in the human rights area in post-communist Hungary, Máté Szabó described a shift in the issues and agendas of civil rights activism from “catacomb” style to a more overt form of “civic” agitation. The last case study, on political participation in Croatia, was presented by Ivan Grdešić, and used public opinion data to demonstrate the limited public interest in electoral participation, the widespread sense of a low level of political efficacy and a concentration on essentially economic problems.

Further plans

The purpose of the Rijeka meeting was not merely to hold another conference as part of a continuing series but to contribute in a more permanent way towards the study of political processes in central and eastern Europe. It is, therefore, intended that the conference proceedings will be published, and information on this project will be circulated in due course. The papers presented at the earlier conferences have already been edited and published as follows:

Fritz Plasser and Andreas Pribersky, eds *Political culture in east central Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1996);

Máté Szabó, ed *The challenge of Europeanization in the region: east central Europe* [*European studies* 2] (Budapest: Hungarian Political Science Association and the Institute for Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1996);

Samo Kropivnik, Igor Lukšić and Drago Zajz, eds *Conflict and consensus in the new and old democracies* (Bratislava: Slovenian Political Science Association, 1997).

It is anticipated that the proceedings of the 1998 conference will be published in due course, and further information on this will appear in future issues of *Participation*. The central European associations are planning future conferences and further collaborative ventures. Further information may be obtained from the organiser of the Rijeka conference:

Ivan Grdešić
Faculty of Political Science
University of Zagreb
Lepušiceva 6
HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia
tel: +385-1-455 8022 / 465 5294
fax: +385-1-465 5316
email: igrdesic@alf.tel.hr

Papers presented

Ágh, Attila (Budapest University of Economics, Hungary), “Democratic deficit in the EU and the accession of the ECE countries”

Caratan, Branko (University of Zagreb, Croatia), “Comparative politics and the issues of nationality”

Coakley, John (University College Dublin, Ireland), “The head of state: chief executive or national symbol?”

Dvoráková, Vladimira (University of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic), “Market economy, market democracy”

Enyedi, Zsolt (Central European University, Budapest, Hungary), “Consolidation of party politics in a new democracy”

Grdešić, Ivan (University of Zagreb, Croatia), “Political participation and democracy”

Heinrich, Hans-Georg (University of Vienna, Austria), “Towards a cultural theory of transition: the strange architecture of post-communist societies”

Klima, Michal (University of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic), “The Czech Republic as the only country without a parliamentary committee for European affairs”

Kunc, Jirí (Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic), “Partyism and anti-partyism in the Czech Republic”

Lukšic, Igor (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia), “Constitutional court: for and against consolidation of democracy”

Riegler, Henriette (Austrian Institute for International Affairs, Vienna, Austria), “Nation-building and citizenship in new democracies”

Szabó, Máté (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary), “From ‘catacomb’ to ‘civic’ activism: transformation of civil rights movements in Hungary after 1989”

Tóka, Gábor (Central European University, Budapest, Hungary), “The salience of left-right issues for politicians’ coalition preferences in east central Europe”

John Coakley
IPSA General Secretary,
University College, Dublin, Ireland